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Here and There in America
Adventures and Observations
of a Craven Lad
Year 1855



Class

Book

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Charles L. Allen
Aug. 4, 1943
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Before commencing the story of my life in America, I must be allowed the privilege of making one or two preliminary observations. Until within the last two or three weeks I had not entertained the remotest idea that I should ever be called upon to give, or feel justified in giving, ~~in a public newspaper~~, any account of where I had been or what I had seen. Not having this object before me, I have not, in many instances, made myself acquainted with such facts as many Englishmen may consider to be specially interesting and instructive. I have therefore to ask that allowance be made for the imperfect and disconnected character of these jottings, when it is borne in mind that I am obliged to trust entirely to memory, having no notes to fall back upon. This may not surprise ~~your readers~~ when told that I did not travel in order "to ~~make a book~~" important as such an undertaking may be; my object was a still more important one, viz., "to make a living." Further, it is recommended to all who may feel disposed to follow me in my travels, to procure access to a map of North America, or, at all events, of the United States; their interest in the narrative will thus be materially increased.

There are incidents in every man's life—moments of exquisite joy, or unutterable woe—of radiant hope, or black despair—so fixed upon the memory, that time in its onward sweep can never efface. They are like faithful pictures of some well-known form or landscape, and are stowed safely away in that strange, capacious store-room—the brain, never to be removed, so long as reason reigns supreme. Ever to be remembered by me is an incident which occurred on a certain Monday evening, fourteen years ago, when, seated before a comfortable fire in Skipton, I somewhat suddenly announced to the family circle my intention of emigrating to America. The strange, sad looks which were then thrown from one to another, are at this moment as vividly before my mind's eye as they were at the time of the occurrence. Three or four days of hurried preparation followed this announcement; then, with mingled feelings of regret and hope, I bid farewell for a time to my native town—regret at leaving many kind friends behind—hope that I should be able to work out a fortune in that vast country, a great part of which remains to this day unexplored.

On the 9th August, 1856, I set sail from Liverpool, and after a somewhat tedious voyage of forty-one days landed in the Bay of Massachusetts. This bay contains numerous islands, about one hundred in number; many of them are very picturesque, and some are very strongly fortified. We sailed up the bay and into Boston harbour, and on the Saturday afternoon I first set foot on American soil. Boston (so named by a Mr Cotton, an Englishman, who was a native of Boston in Lincolnshire) is situated on one of the many promontories which give to the bay such a romantic appearance; this promontory is connected with the main-land by an isthmus, about a mile in breadth, and which, I am told, was once overflowed by the tide. Boston is the chief town of the State of Massachusetts, and contains now a population of 178,000 inhabitants. On landing in Boston I instituted a strict and searching examination into the state of my exchequer, and found that my total available resources amounted to the very handsome sum of twenty-two shillings and sixpence, but not thinking it at all necessary to take the cute Yankees into confidence, or to proclaim to the world the consumptive nature of my purse, I marched boldly into the Fleet-street Hotel, and with an air of perfect indifference, and the assurance of a "Yorkshire biter," took up transient board and lodging at the rate of one and a half dollars, or six shillings and threepence, per day. This I considered to be doing the thing rather coolly, seeing that in something less than four days I should be in a strange country and without a single cent in my pockets. In passing along the streets of Boston I noticed that I was regarded by many of the passers by with the little curiosity; and for some time I could not make out what was the matter. Some would look at me and smile good-naturedly; others would turn round and look after me; at last the puzzle was solved. Before quitting England I had taken the precaution to rig myself out in a new suit of clothes, including a hat of the then most fashionable shape, which was very tall, with a brim about the width of a shilling; and this it was which the Bostonians, with much curiosity, their own hats

being very low, with brims about as wide as a large-sized sancer. My offending head-protector was thrown aside on the first convenient occasion. Almost the first peculiarity which I noticed in the inhabitants of Boston was their remarkably rapid utterance; words of three or four syllables they would always manage in some way or other to contract into about two. An auctioneer, whom I heard on the first Saturday night after my arrival, literally astonished me; indeed, so great was his "power of talk," that I would have backed him to utter in a given time as much as any half-dozen auctioneers whom I had ever heard in England. It would require a far more experienced pen than mine to do justice to the characteristics of the people of the State of Massachusetts, and especially of those in the city of Boston. They are, as a class, the best educated men I ever met with, and their industry is equal to their education. An idler in the streets is a curiosity, and during my short stay there I do not remember to have seen a single beggar. In the streets or in the stores, everything is bustle and activity. Drunkenness is of very rare occurrence. I have come across a clever caricature of these people, which, in a distorted manner, hits off their true features admirably. It is written by a *Firpoath*, and I must ask leave to insert it here:—"These Yankees are certainly a very strange race of people. You will see them with their ~~cel-skins~~ upon their hair, to save the expense of barbers, and their ear-rings in their ears to improve their sight, to see how to cheat you better, I suppose. They would sooner die than part with one of these ornaments, unless you pay them well for it. At the same time, they live upon nothing. A rasher of pork is a feast for them, even on holidays. Their favourite drink is nothing but switchel or molasses and water, which they tell you is better than burgundy or champagne. They are, however, better taught than fed, and make the finest, boldest sailors in the world. They can sail to the North Pole and back in an egg-shell, if the ice does not break it. Indeed, they are seamen by birth, and box the compass in their cradles. You know our genteel laziness unfits us (Virginians) for the drudgery of commerce, so we leave it all to the Yankees. These crafting part of them come here at all seasons in their sloops and schooners, bringing a miscellaneous cargo of all sorts of ~~notions~~, not metaphysical but material, such as cheese, butter, potatoes, cranberries, onions, beets, *coffee*, you smile, but it is a fact that, understanding some years ago that the yellow fever was raging here with great violence, some of them very charitably risked their own lives to bring us a large quantity of ready-made coffins, of all sizes, in nests, one within another, to supply customers at a moment's warning; an insult which we have hardly forgiven them yet. You will see them sailing up into all our bays, rivers, and creeks, wherever the water runs. As the winter comes on they creep into some little harbour, where they anchor their vessels, and open store on board, retailing out their articles of every kind to the poor countrymen who come to buy. Towards the spring they sail away with a load of planks or shingles, which they often get *very cheap*. Indeed, the whole race of Yankee seamen are certainly the most enterprising people in the world. They are in all quarters of the globe where a penny is to be made. In short, they love money a little more than their own lives. What is worst, they are not always very nice about the means of making it, but are ready to break laws like cobwebs whenever it suits their interest." Commending this pungent description to those whom it most concerns, viz., the New Englanders, I person to remark that, on taking my first public meal in the United States I was forcibly reminded how very necessary it was for a stranger to keep a sharp look out, if he wanted not to be thought a greenhorn by such remarkably sharp practitioners. By the time that I had pretty comfortably settled myself in a chair, and taken a calm leisurely survey of the good things set before me, thinking whether I would take a little of this, that, and the other, there was a regular commotion, and one after the other the Bostonians literally jumped out of their seats and bolted from the room,

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and I saw, to my utter astonishment, that they had actually finished dining before I had well begun. I did not, however, allow my astonishment to inflict an injustice on my poor inoffending stomach, but went on with my repast in solitude and silence. This rapacious method of taking food, or, more accurately speaking, of "devouring" it, I afterwards found to be almost universally prevalent in America.

On the fourth day after my arrival I sought for and obtained employment in a store (all shops are called stores), and received for the first month thirty-seven shillings and sixpence per week; after that time my wages were advanced to fifty shillings per week, and continued so for the next four months, when the firm unfortunately failed, being indebted to me at the time for wages £11. During my five months stay in Boston I often visited the far-famed Bunker's Hill. It is situated about a mile north of Boston, and is separated from it by a creek, called the Mystic River. It was into this river that a party of New-Englanders, disguised as Indians, threw the unfortunate chests of tea, which the British attempted to land in the city. Bunker's Hill is an inconsiderable elevation, resembling somewhat in size and shape the place well known to all Skiptonians as "The Firth." It was on this hill, and a neighbouring elevation called Breed's Hill, that a very fierce engagement took place between the British and the American troops on June 17th, 1775, and, although the latter were ultimately driven from behind the breast-works which they had thrown up the previous evening, the British loss was more than double that of the Americans. The numbers killed and wounded were: British, 1054 men; Americans, 433 men. This place is now used by the Bostonians as a pleasure-ground; visitors to it are very numerous, and the Yankee is never tired of telling strangers how his countrymen "whipped the Britishers," and how tenaciously and bravely the New-Englanders struggled for liberty and independence. On the top of the hill is a large obelisk, erected to the memory of the brave men who fell whilst fighting for freedom; and on one side of it, near the top, is a small plain stone which marks the place where the body of General Warren (a physician of Boston) was found after the battle. Another relic of this war was pointed out to me on the outside of Brattle-street church, where there is a cannon ball firmly embedded in the wall.

I must not forget to mention that, in one particular, Boston is favoured above any other American city which I have seen, in having an enclosure or park of about seventy acres, right in its very centre. This is a great boon to the inhabitants, and they are very justly proud of it. It is bounded on three sides by some of the finest public and private buildings, one of which is the State-house, 230 feet above the sea level. From the summit of this building the view of the bay, the islands, the neighbouring heights, and the adjoining country, is one of the finest I ever saw. Directly after my arrival here I was favoured with a sight of a grand military review in this enclosure, which, by-the-bye, is called Boston Common, and I must say I was anything but favourably impressed with what I witnessed. Instead of the smart soldierly bearing observable in the British army, the "military" had all the appearance of the most awkward of "awkward squads," and I could not but conclude that the *notre cher* steel of the United States army had been doing business the previous day as a *drag* or *cab* horse; a better collection of raw-boned, thorough-going hacks I never saw either before or since. I will now take leave of Boston. Alas! from the day of my arrival in America I had set my mind upon trying my fortune in the far West, ever believing in the proverb "Nothing ventured, nothing won." I felt this to be, in my case, a *solo* maxim to follow, especially as I had very little to venture and everything to win. So, with this piece of "Tupper improved," we will turn our faces in the direction of the setting sun.

(To be continued.)

I left Boston in the latter part of February, 1859, taking my ticket for Chicago, which is about 1,200 miles due west from Boston. The journey (performed wholly by railway) occupied about three days and three nights. We reached Springfield on the evening of the first day. A Yankee entered the train at this station, and I subsequently found that he was going out West to make his fortune. In the course of conversation he informed me that he was a sawyer, a carpenter, and a shoemaker—three very useful men—and he "guessed" he should be pretty certain to attain his object. The weather was intensely cold, and snow lay very thick upon the ground. Between Albany and Buffalo our train met with a little misfortune, which delayed us three or four hours. It was between three and four o'clock in the morning, and probably more than one-half the passengers were comfortably asleep in their "berths," when the engine ran into a monster snow-drift, which, of course, brought us to a dead-lock. What was to be done? Some of the passengers alighted, others kept their places; I was amongst the former, and after ascertaining the cause of the stoppage and the probable time we should be delayed, three of us started for a farm house, which we espied at some little distance. Knocking at the door and arousing the inmates we told them what had happened, and asked to be allowed to warm ourselves, for the cold was something fearful; this privilege was readily granted, and we remained there until after seven o'clock, when, returning to the train, we found the obstructing snow was nearly cleared away. Everything being ready, we made a fresh start at about 8-0 a.m., and reached Buffalo in the afternoon of that day. This town is about twenty-four miles from the Niagara Falls, and is the chief emporium of the trade on Lake Erie; here, also, is the western termination of the celebrated Erie Canal, which runs from Albany, a distance of 363 miles. By means of this canal, a direct water communication is formed between New York and the large internal seas of North America, and through them to the great western empire of the United States and the rivers Missouri, Mississippi, and Ohio. From Buffalo we proceeded to Cleveland, another important town on Lake Erie. This part of our journey was a most delightful one; the railway runs for the most part along the shores of the lake, which looked none the less beautiful and picturesque from its being frozen over. Through Cleveland we passed on to Toledo, situated on the extreme west point of the lake, and from thence to Chicago at the foot of Lake Michigan. I had partly expected that at Chicago I should be pretty near the borders of civilization, and was therefore somewhat surprised to find a bustling, flourishing town of considerable size. This, my first long journey on an American railway, gave me ample opportunity to compare the accommodation with railway accommodation in this country, and I most unhesitatingly give the American system the preference with regard to general comfort. There are no first, second, and third-class carriages as in this country; consequently, all passengers are placed upon an equal footing. American railway-cars are much larger than ours, and by means of small platforms between them a passenger can go from one car to another through the whole length of the train, and, although the trains are provided with smoking cars, if you prefer to burn the fragrant weed in the open air you can do so on the platform between the cars. Another peculiarity of an American train is its "sleeping car," which will accommodate about fifty persons; the beds or berths are placed in two rows around the sides of the car, the lower ones being double and the upper ones single. During the day these berths can be folded up against the sides of the car, so that it may be used as an ordinary passenger car. There is an extra charge, usually a dollar per night, for this sleeping accommodation, and on turning out in the morning you find your boots are blacked ready to your hand, or, rather, to your feet; and as a man would look rather curious with clean boots and a dirty face, &c., you have accommodation for washing and all other toilet necessities. During very hot weather iced-water is supplied to passengers free of charge. Newsboys generally accompany trains and pass from car to car with their

papers, and after they have done the paper business they supply you with delicacies of various descriptions. I must just remark on the somewhat summary manner in which the Americans deal with refractory or disorderly passengers; by a signal from the conductor, the steam is shut off, and the train brought to a stand, the offending individual is then politely requested to step out of the car; should he refuse to do this, he straightway receives the Irishman's hint, and is put out, and the train proceeds on its journey, leaving him in meditation as to the best way of reaching his destination. I remained a few weeks in Chicago, but could not make up my mind to settle there, having an ardent desire to taste the romantic life of a primitive settlement, and in consequence determined, as soon as the ice should break up on the Mississippi river, to take my passage in one of the steamers going north. During my stay in this town, I came across the Yankee who had joined us in the train at Springfield, our sawyer, carpenter, shoemaker friend. His short reminiscences of western life were certainly not very encouraging. As a rather uncommon prelude to the making of his fortune, he had been obliged to dispose of his rifle and his watch, and he concluded an eloquent

appeal to my sympathy, by describing himself emphatically as *dead broke*. Having rendered him some little assistance we parted company, and I did not see him again.

I think it was in the month of April when the ice broke up on the Mississippi, and on receiving the news that the river was open for navigation, I quitted Chicago and travelled by railway to Galena, a distance of about 228 miles. Galena, at that time the terminus of the rail-roads west, is situated near the Mississippi river in the extreme north-west of the State of Illinois. Arrived here, I lost no time in securing my passage in an old steamboat "The Hamburg" which was chartered for St. Paul, near to the falls of St. Anthony, a distance, as the river runs, of about 700 miles N. W. from Galena. Galena which was then a small mining town of, I should say, about 1,500 inhabitants, has now become celebrated as the former residence and place of business of the present president of the United States, General Grant. Leaving Galena, we steamed slowly down the Fever river into the Mississippi, which at this place is something like a mile in width. Here I may take the opportunity of saying that I feel my utter inability to give anything like an adequate description of what I saw during the five days spent on the steamboat "Hamburg" en route to St. Paul, indeed any attempt to trace on paper the wild and romantic scenery of this part of the Mississippi must be a lamentable failure—through extensive prairies, stretching away from the banks of the river as far as the eye could reach—woods and forests of almost boundless extent through which steals the timid deer, pursued by the wily Indian—a crystal lake of surpassing beauty, through which the mighty river rolls almost unperceived. Steaming up the river we passed numerous sand-bars; these were invariably covered with large flocks of wild geese, and as each passenger carried a rifle or revolver, much amusement was caused by shooting at these geese from the boat. The sound of the discharge would re-echo from hill to hill. Occasionally a few Indians attracted by the sounds of our rifles, would come down to the banks of the river and hail us with their wild loo, loo, loo, loo, whilst in the distance we could often see the blue curling smoke ascending from their wigwams. We had more than one opportunity of making an examination of their wigwams (or lodges), as the "Hamburg" stopped at some convenient place to take in wood for fuel, as it usually did about twice a day. These wigwams differ from each other very little in appearance, being built with an eye to comfort rather than beauty. The poles which constitute the framework are driven into the ground in a circular form, these are then covered with the skins of wild animals the bark of trees, the latter material greatly predominating. In shape they are like a sugar-loaf, and have a small aperture at the top to allow the escape of the smoke from the fire which burns in the centre of the wigwam. Unprepossessing as these structures appear on the outside, they are nevertheless water-proof and I should suppose pretty comfortable. Several of us went off the boat to examine one which was near to the river. Inside we found an old "squaw" (woman) busy cooking. Another squaw was skinning a deer, at which she was very expert, while her huge lord sat

smoking his keekakeeck, (a kind of tobacco). A couple of greasy, copper-headed little papooses (children) were playing around, with their faces fantastically striped with some red colouring matter, and with beads and trinkets plaited in their hair. At intervals along the river, we should come across a place where some bold emigrant had marched into the woods, with his axe on one shoulder, and his rifle on the other, to do battle with the woods and forests and wild animals. A settler's life is one of hard and continuous manual toil. An attack is first commenced on the tall forest trees; with the wood thus obtained a log hut is built, having few pretensions to architectural beauty; by-and-bye, with the aid of his axe, a few acres are cleared and the brushwood burnt, and after months of weary labour the ground is at length ready for cultivation. As I passed some of these places, and heard the sound of the settler's axe, and the crash of the falling trees, the bark of his faithful dog, and the tinkling of the cow-bells in the woods, the thought would often strike me "civilization has obtained a footing here;" could I revisit these now wild scenes some 50 or 100 years hence, perhaps I should find a flourishing, populous city.

At length we reached St. Paul in the territory of Wisconsin, the head of the navigation of the Lower Mississippi, distant about 2,000 miles from New Orleans. It was then a small town of about 2,000 inhabitants, and a more motley gathering I have seldom seen. It is the trading post of the Pembina half-breeds, a race half French and half Indians—who live by hunting on lands adjoining the Hudson's Bay territory, and come down here in the spring to sell their furs and take back provisions for the winter. At the time of our arrival these half-breeds and other Indians had come down with their furs; the place was all astir—gambling, drinking, and fighting seemed to be the order of the day, and now, thought I, here I am in the far West. I stayed two days at this place, when, hearing of another small settlement nine miles further up the river, I determined to visit it, and started off in company with a friend. We were obliged to walk, there being no other road but an Indian trail; when about half-way we espied, to our dismay, four Indians seated smoking under the brow of a hill, with their guns and tomahawks by their sides. We looked at each other, and then at the Indians, and then at our revolvers, for we both had revolvers, though we had never shot at anything but geese on the sand-bars and the idea of being obliged to shoot at these dumpy-looking customers in self-defence, was something new to us. Our path led pretty close to where they were seated, and after holding a short consultation we determined to proceed at all hazards; so, putting on a bold front, we advanced, keeping a sharp eye on all their movements, and they in turn eyed us as keenly. However, they did not attempt to molest us; and when we had got well past them we took pretty long strides the remainder of the way to St. Anthony.

St. Anthony I found to be a small settlement containing about 1,000 inhabitants. It is on the left or east bank of the Mississippi, in the state of Minnesota (an Indian name signifying water-country, this state abounding in lakes, many of which are very extensive and of surpassing beauty). The chief employment of the settlers was that of "lumbering," or "logging," a hard enough life, certainly, but by no means devoid of interest or excitement. These lumberers usually start off in groups and proceed up the river; after travelling a considerable distance, they then strike off into the immense pine forests and begin their arduous task of cutting down the pine, and other trees. When the trees are felled and all their branches lopped off, they are cut into logs of convenient sizes for being dragged to the river, to which they are taken and placed upon the ice. These logs remain until the ice breaks up, when, away they go rolling, ducking and tumbling one over the other, down the river, looking more like porpoises at play than inanimate blocks of wood. This expeditious and cheap mode of transit is much valued by the settlers, as, of course, all their logs are delivered "carriage paid." In case of injury or loss, however, there is the disadvantage of having no one to fall back upon for "damages." The logs are brought up at some convenient trading point, and a general re-appointment takes place; every "lumberer" having placed a distinctive mark on his logs. Identification is a comparatively easy

Close to St. Anthony are situated the celebrated falls of that name, on the river Mississippi, which is, at this point, I should say something over half a mile in width. No verbal description could realise the imposing spectacle here presented by the St. Anthony's falls. An ever-rolling volume of water, half a mile in width and from fifteen to twenty yards in height, must be seen before any idea is gained of its awful grandeur.

About five hundred yards below the fall, in consequence of a bend in the river, the spectator is enabled to take up a position on a considerable eminence, right in front of the centre of the falls. An enterprising Yankee, who owns this part of the river's bank, has not been slow to improve upon the natural advantage of the position, he has erected a frame-tower of wood about one hundred feet in height, and over the entrance are the words—

"Cheever's Tower,"

"Pay your dime and climb."

A dime being equal to about fivepence, it is really worth that trifling sum, in addition to the fatigue of climbing, to be rewarded with the magnificent view which is gained when you reach the summit. Elevated considerably above the falls and the surrounding country, the prospect in whatever direction you turn is most impressive and wild, whilst beneath and stretching away for miles the majestic river rolls quietly and solemnly along to the embrace of its parent ocean.

I must here mention another very pretty sight in this neighbourhood, viz., the falls of Minnehaha, a name well known in this country to readers of Longfellow's "Hiawatha." There is a beautiful chain of lakes in this district which empty themselves into the Mississippi. Between the outlet of the last of these lakes and the river are the falls of Minnehaha. The stream, as regards the volume of water, is a very insignificant one, the falls being not more than some 25 to 30 feet in width, and from 35 to 40 feet in height, but as the water is precipitated over the rock it is broken into myriads of crystal drops, no part of it coming down in a stream; hence the Indian name "Minnehaha" (laughing-water). As the rock is an overhanging one there is a space of a few feet at the base, between it and the water. The spectator is thus enabled to get behind the water. I have stood there many times and the effect produced by the falling water is very pretty. Three miles below the falls of Minnehaha, and seven miles south of St. Anthony is Fort Snelling, a place built for the protection of the settlers against the Indians, to be used in any case of emergency. It is always garrisoned with a few soldiers belonging to the United States army. About 100 yards above the falls of St. Anthony in the middle of the river is a picturesque little island named after its discoverer, a Catholic Missionary, Father Hennepin. Hennepin Island is about 200 yards by 50 yards. There has recently been a suspension bridge thrown across from the main-land to the island, and on the island itself a number of saw-mills have been erected, the machinery of course being worked by water power. About 90 miles above St. Anthony there is a Missionary Station, named Crow Wing, to which I may have to refer in a subsequent letter. I must now recur to St. Anthony.

I took a fancy to settle, for a short time at least, in this wild and out-of-way place, and accordingly made hasty preparations for commencing business. In doing this I was most heartily welcomed and assisted by the people of St. Anthony, who gladly co-operate with any fresh arrival, especially, as in my case, if he be a young man. I had noticed on my first arrival in the village that five new wooden stores were being erected, and on enquiry, was told that one could be got ready for occupation in about two days. I was straightway installed as tenant, at a rent of £40 p-year. During the twelve months which I lived in this place, my business prospered far better than I at first anticipated it would do.

Soon after my arrival, St. Anthony was honoured by the simultaneous visits of two real tribes of Indians, the Sioux and the Chippewas, numbering together several hundred souls. These tribes, though at endless war with each other, had through the intervention of the United States Indian agent, concluded a treaty of peace for the space of three days, whilst their respective hunting grounds were being changed. They came down the river together in their canoes,

which were pulled ashore just above the falls. The squaws (who do all the drudgery whilst Mr. Indian struts about with his rifle over his shoulder) began to pitch the tents, which occupation lasted them until about noon. While this work was going on, the little papooses, who might otherwise have been troublesome, were suspended in small wicker-work baskets, to the boughs of trees. This primitive method of disposing of a "domestic difficulty" reminded me forcibly of the old nursery rhyme—

"Rock-a-boo baby upon the tree top,

When the wind blows the cradle will rock,"

and truly these squaws have something more to do than rock the cradle. We were given to understand that the Indians had partaken of very little food for the last three days, and in consequence we collected for them a sum of money wherewith to purchase provisions. In return for this kindness, it was agreed amongst them, that the two tribes should dance us the war dance, which they accordingly did that same afternoon; but such dancing and such music, I never witnessed or heard before or since. The leading, in fact the only musical instrument in the band, was a drum, formed out of an old powder keg, covered at the ends with the dried skin of some wild animal. Upon this rude instrument, an Indian kept up a continual rattle with a couple of short sticks. The harmony being completed by three or four more Indians, squatted upon the ground, keeping up a continual buzz-z-z-z, buzz-z-z-z. The Indians (except the women who do not join in the dance) then formed in lines, each line being headed by a young brave, at some distance from the musicians; then began the dance which consisted of nothing more or less than a series of the most fantastic hops, skips and jumps; and which bore about as much resemblance to "the poetry of motion" as a grisly bear does to the graceful gazelle. Gradually advancing to the buzzing group on the ground, they then formed a semicircle, and finished the business by giving us the war-whoop—a burst of the wildest yelling and screaming that can possibly be imagined. I really had no idea before that such discordant and distracting sounds could issue from human throats! The day following this exhibition on the part of the Indians, I noticed a party of them flattening their noses against the windows of my store. Not being too favourably impressed with their personal appearance, I kept a pretty sharp eye on their movements, but almost before I was aware of the fact, so stealthily and cat-like were their movements, several of them were inside the store, handling and examining anything that came in their way. They showed special delight in sundry broad gruns at a few old English penny pieces, which I happened to keep in a little case on the counter. I in turn examined their tomahawks, and to my surprise found that most of them had been made in Sheffield, and bore the maker's name. At the end of three days the Indians took their departure to their respective hunting grounds.

The buildings, private and public in St. Anthony were all of wood. We had of course our wooden chapel, which was not remarkable for either convenience or architectural adornment, but approached never to be sufficiently commodious for the requirements of the settlers. Hymn books and bibles were by no means too plentiful. One little circumstance in connection with this chapel, indicative of our primitive style of life, struck me as being somewhat peculiar and at variance with the recognized modes of worship in civilized countries. Settlers residing at a distance from St. Anthony would leave their houses on the Sunday morning, taking care to bring their guns or rifles with them, with these thrown over their shoulders, they would march into the chapel and coolly proceed to stack them in one corner of the building. Service concluded, they would then set their faces homeward, very liable, I am afraid, to disregard the preacher and his precepts should any choice game chance to come across their path in their journey.

As stated in my last letter, my business prospered, and increasing prosperity as is often the case, brought in its train ever-watchful and lynx-eyed ambition. I was by no means satisfied with being able to see my whole stock of worldly goods, confined within the limited dimensions of a wooden store. I would not be content until I tried a larger field of enterprise, and a newly settled district or country is certainly about one of the best places in the world in which to indulge a disposition

of this nature to its utmost extent. Unnumbered opportunities present themselves in rapid succession.

There appears to my mind to be something especially fascinating for most people in being able to rank themselves amongst the owners of the soil. There is an "aristocratic ring" in the words "landed proprietor," which I have no doubt is very charming, but why people should prefer this mode of investment to others of a more profitable nature I could never satisfactorily determine. Neither can I, for the life of me, make out why the honest tradesman who has made his £10,000, should be considered a "vulgar fellow," when compared with his fellow-mortals who have inherited a rent-roll of £500 per annum, and yet is the most consummate block-head to be met with in a day's ride. Leaving those little social problems to be dealt with by wiser heads, I pass on to the subject in hand, wondering why I made the above digression.

I determined to buy a farm—but thereby hangs a tale, to which I devote the earnest attention of any intending emigrants, that they may learn, at all events, the preliminary part of the business to be gone through. Understand first, that a farm in the back woods of America and a farm in England are two very different things. In this country none but wealthy persons indulge in the luxury of farm-buying. In America, on the contrary, any man with a few hundred loose dollars in his pocket may purchase a farm of goodly size. The fact is, he there buys a farm very much in the same way that a sculptor buys a statue, when he purchases a block of marble—the raw material is there, the manufactured article will appear only after much toil, trouble, expense and anxiety. Again, the United States government, with a view to keep out speculators and encourage actual settlers, have imposed certain conditions, which all buyers of original lots must observe. Here is a district which has been surveyed, it consists of a tract of land six miles square. The district is divided into thirty-six sections, each section containing one square mile of land. These sections are again divided into half sections and quarter sections, a quarter section consisting of a superficial area of 160 acres. Thus, we have in a district one hundred and forty-four farms of 160 acres each, and in this shape it is offered for sale to the public. An intending purchaser selects his farm and procures its allotment to himself; but before the bargain is completed, he must clear an acre of ground, build himself a hut or "shanty" eight feet by ten feet. This "shanty" must have a floor, a door and a window, and by way of furniture, it must contain a stove and a bed, he must call the place his homestead, and visit it at least once a month. When these conditions are complied with, he must pre-empt the property, pay down the purchase money—a dollar and a quarter an acre, and swear allegiance to the United States government; the farm then becomes his absolute property. If at any time, after its allotment and before its pre-emption, a man should not visit his farm for four consecutive weeks, any other man may procure its allotment to himself, taking advantage of all improvements made by his predecessor. This familiar method of obtaining a farm is called "jumping it."

I procured the allotment of 160 acres—rather as I should say, 137½ acres of land only the remaining part of my claim happened to be a portion of a lake called Minnetonka. Taking with me two men and a team of horses one cold winter's day, I started off into the woods to take my first lesson in the farming business, not without sundry misgivings as to my capability for the undertaking. Snow was pretty thick upon the ground, and our journey of eighteen miles was dull and dreary enough. Our only available road was an Indian main trail which we followed for a great part of the distance, but as our destination was about a mile out of this trail we were at length obliged to take to the woods, blazing the trees (chopping off pieces of bark) as we went along, to serve as guides on our return. After encountering many difficulties, we reached our journey's end about one o'clock in the afternoon, and at once began to look about for a convenient place upon which to erect our "shanty." Fixing upon a delightful spot on a small promontory overlooking Lake Minnetonka we went to work with a will, and the way we used our hatchets and made the chips fly was a sight worth seeing. Each man was his own architect, builder, and labourer; the result of this lucky combination of crafts was that within two or three hours my "shanty" was erected—there it stood in its beautiful and unadorned simplicity, a monument to our united industry, and about one of

the most ricketty places in creation in which to spend a night. Though, to convince the officials of the Government that I was disposed to act in a spirit of liberality towards them, and did not begrudge them a few feet more or less of trumpety timber, my shanty was made 10 feet by 12 feet instead of the minimum 8 feet by 10 feet. Having thus put things tolerably "ship-shape," and made the best possible preparations for spending the night there, my two companions left me about four o'clock taking one of the horses with them and leaving me the other. We had kindled a fire, and after the departure of my companions I fell to chopping wood in order to keep the fire a-going. However simple the art of wood-chopping may appear, I did not make much headway, my hands (unused to work of this nature) were already much blistered, and being a bad marksman with a hatchet, I could not for the life of me hit the wood in the exact place where I wanted to hit it, nor could I hit any place twice in succession; indeed, many times I was in imminent danger of missing the tree altogether, and of doing myself some serious bodily injury. It soon became apparent that were I to chop wood all night, the fire would be but scantily supplied, if indeed I could keep it burning at all. What was to be done? To stay there without a fire would be perfect madness. Robinson Crusoe might—or might not—be happy when he could exclaim:

"I am monarch of all I survey."

but I can assure my readers that it was far from pleasant to me thus to know that I was "out of humanity's reach." The nearest inhabited dwelling was about five miles away, at a settlement called Whyazetta, consisting of two or three shanties and an hotel. The hotel was merely a place of accommodation for claim seekers. Thither I at length determined to go, and accordingly mounted my horse and rode off. It was exactly the place I wanted, for on looking at an unostentatious signboard over the door I saw the welcome news, "LOUNGING HERE FOR MAN AND OUSE." On this intimation I dismounted and was shown into what I suppose did duty for the "commercial room." It was a pretty large room, and quite as unassuming in appearance as the signboard outside. There was evident proof of a studied primitive simplicity in the arrangement and decoration of this room. No attempt at gorgeous display was there, to allure idlers and loungers to fritter away their time and money; for had Sam Weller himself been there with his "patent double-million magnifyin' glasses o' extra power," it would have puzzled him to see anything more than a table, a hulk, a stove, and a few three-legged stools. After supper I went to bed; my bed was in an upper story and was reached by means of the ladder above-mentioned. During my sojourn in this part of America, I, along with a companion, paid another visit to this hotel. It was on an intensely cold night, the thermometer standing at some 30 degrees below zero. Soon after we had gone to bed there was a thundering rattle at the door, and on its being opened, in bounded a troop of Indians along with a few trappers. They had brought their own whiskey with them and were evidently bent on "making a night of it." They immediately commenced card-playing and whiskey-drinking, which they kept up until three or four o'clock in the morning. The perfect babel of tongues was almost deafening, and we were shivering in bed from cold, although the stove-pipe came up close to the head of the bed. Almost every moment we expected some of the Indians coming up the ladder into the bedroom; this they did not do, however, but greatly to our relief took their departure at about the time above named. When we awoke in the morning the snow had penetrated through the roof, and lay in considerable patches on the bed; and so intense was the cold that our condensed breath had actually become frozen on the pillow. So much for hotel accommodation in the backwoods.

During the spring or summer of 1858, I chanced to be a witness of an Indian battle. A party of white people were out in a steam-boat on the Minnesota river, and when about 15 or 20 miles from St. Anthony we came upon two tribes of Indians—the Sioux and the Chippeways, already mentioned—engaged in deadly conflict. It was a mere guerilla affair, the combatants running, or creeping hither and thither, seeking shelter behind trees or any object which would afford temporary shelter; dodging round from spot to spot in order to get a chance of firing at an enemy. The squaws, although not actually engaged in fighting,

would crawl about on their hands and knees endeavouring by every possible means to secure their own wounded warriors, or obtain possession of a fallen enemy for the purpose of burning his body. The battle lasted some two or three hours. After it was over we landed from the boat in order, if possible, to render assistance to any of the unfortunate wounded who might require it. We picked up I think about 16 men, some of them very seriously injured. One poor fellow I remember had received a nasty bullet wound in the jaw, which had also split his tongue, he must have suffered intensely, but bore the pain heroically. We took all the men on board the steamboat, and conveyed them thence to St. Anthony, where they received such temporary medical attention as the place could command, after which they were sent off in another boat up the Mississippi to Crow Wing, to be dealt with by the U. S. Indian agent. A few weeks after this battle I saw 26 Chippewas on the war-trail. They came down through the straits of St. Anthony in single file, uttering their buzz-z-z and went—no one knew whither. Three days afterwards six of them returned, the remaining 20, I have no doubt, had been slain in battle. That fighting had been going on was apparent. The first of the six who returned carried in his hands, held up in front of his breast an iron hoop about 10 inches in diameter; across this hoop was a piece of string, and on the string were fastened several scalps. The Indians appeared to be delighted with these bloody trophies of their valor, and returned as they had gone, in single file, with their everling buzz-z-z.

In the fall of '68 I determined to leave St. Anthony, and accordingly proceeded to clear out my stock-in-trade, and dispose of my farm. This latter article I had some difficulty with, until at last I came across a plegmatic Dutchman, who seemed not only possessed of the useful capital, but desirous of driving a bargain with it. After a few necessary preliminary questions on his part as to its general character, situation, &c., and a good deal of eloquence on my part as to its capability, fertility, and many other advantages "too numerous to mention," we started off in company to make a personal inspection, and clear up all dubious or disputed points. As we jogged along together, I began to fear least my friend the Dutchman might want to see too much, for of course it would be quite natural on his part to take as general survey of the farm as was possible, but how was I prepared to comply with his wishes in this respect? I had only visited the farm some five or six times, had never been round it in my life, and knew very little about it, except that by far the greater part of it was covered with trees, including, as I was told by the government surveyor, some 40 acres of black walnut timber though (to confess my ignorance) I did not know a black walnut tree from the commonest tree in the forest! I was however obliged to make the best of such knowledge as I did possess, trusting to the chapter of accidents to bring me through. I knew the way to my "shanty," and determined to make that place our starting point. My "improvements" being about there, I calculated that the Dutchman's "first impressions" would not be unfavourable ones, whatever might turn up afterwards. Arriving on the spot, lo! my shanty was nowhere to be seen. Could I have lost my way? No. Catastrophe number one! The Indians had burnt my elegant homestead to ashes, everything had disappeared with the exception of the sheet-iron stove, which, like some faithful Milner's safe, had survived the general conflagration. There we left it "alone in its glory," and for aught I know to the contrary it may be standing there yet. From this spot we turned away into a large swamp-meadow, consisting of some 30 to 40 acres. Thought I, if "Mynheer Von Duck" can only be kept in the open space all will go well. Alas for my hopes! He proposed that we should strike into the woods and view the farm on the opposite side to where we then were. "Oh yes, certainly," said I aloud. "Now for it," thought I to myself, "We shall be lost in the woods that's certain," for I could no more have walked the boundary line of my farm, than I could have crossed the broad Atlantic in the Rob Roy canoe, without compass. Away we started, and after wandering about for some time—catastrophe number two!—lost in the woods, uncertainty in my own mind as to whether I am showing the Dutchman my property, or that of some other person, an hour and a half's dubitation we then emerged from the woods on to the Indian

main-trail, and about a mile away from the nearest point of my farm. My companion was evidently satisfied with his survey, and thanks to the steaming hot day and the troublesome mosquitoes, he proposed that we should return to St. Anthony at once. I can assure you I was not slow to indulge him on this point; on returning for our horses we made the best of our way home.

Next day our bargain was completed. My stock-in-trade was already cleared out, and in a few days I had adieu to St. Anthony. In taking leave of the place, it will not be inopportune to mention that during my stay there the population of the place increased very rapidly—new settlers were constantly making their appearance, a thriving trade sprang up, and St. Anthony may now be classed amongst the many small but thriving towns in the far west. It can now be reached by rail, and, of course, in a much shorter time than when I first went there. Opposite to St. Anthony, on the other side of the Mississippi, stands Minneapolis, a town which in a few years has made wonderful progression. When I first went into that neighbourhood Minneapolis consisted of about fourteen "log shanties"; it now numbers, I suppose, some 10,000 or 12,000 inhabitants. I ought to have mentioned previously that on the very spot where I saw the Indian war-dance, on my arrival, there is now a State University, which cost some £20,000 in building.

Taking my passage in an old trading steam boat, called the "Jacob Strader," bound down the river, I quitted St. Anthony, without having any settled plans as to future proceedings. I was thus ready to seize upon any favourable opportunity which might present itself. The boat was bound for St. Louis, in the State of Missouri, and I paid my fare to that place. We were 14 days in running down, calling at every town en route, for trading purposes. The time passed gayly enough on board. Lovers of nature enjoyed endless opportunities of gratification in the wild and romantic scenery through which we passed, whilst ever and anon a tidler would strike up some lively air, and we would trip it merrily on the "light fantastic too." Amongst the many places of interest which we passed on the way to St. Louis, I must not forget to mention Nauvoo, in the State of Illinois. This place was built by Joe Smith and his followers, between the years 1839 and 1845, and it was here that the founder of Mormonism was shot by an infuriated mob. Joe Smith, after suffering much persecution at different places in the States of New York, Ohio, and Missouri, was at length driven, along with his followers, to seek refuge in the State of Illinois. Here, for a time, they managed to prosper, and were not unfavourably received by the people of the state. They bought a very fine tract of land in Hancock County, and began to build the city and temple of Nauvoo. They were encouraged by the Legislature of Illinois, which passed an Act granting great and injudicious privileges to the city, and so rapidly did it prosper that in four years time Nauvoo contained a population of about 20,000 souls. At the end of that time, however, the aspect of affairs underwent a change: the acts of the "saints" had already aroused the indignation of the people of Illinois, and these being joined by the enemies of Mormonism from other states, a riot ensued, the military were called out to preserve the peace, and Joe Smith, with his brother Hiram and a few other leaders, on receiving an assurance of protection from the Legislature, gave themselves up to the authorities; but, being left with a guard of seven or eight men, the infuriated mob, setting the law at defiance, dragged the men from jail, and immediately shot Joe Smith and his brother. Shortly after these proceedings, the Mormons were driven from the place by force, and after wandering about the country ultimately established themselves at Utah, in Oregon.

It was about mid-day when our boat stopped at Nauvoo. The town is built on the side of a hill which slopes upwards from the river. It was then in anything but a flourishing condition, many of the houses which had suffered during the riot, not having been re-built. Right on the top of the hill are the ruins of the temple, which can be seen from a distance of 20 or 30 miles. Having a few hours to spare, a party of us went up the hill to view this once magnificent place, we found it to be 128 feet long, and were informed that prior to its destruction it was 77 feet high. Inside were the ruins of a very large baptismal font, consisting of a stone reservoir, resting upon the backs of 12 oxen, also cut

out of stone, life size; both the font and the axen were much shattered. There were two subterranean rooms, intended, we were told, to do duty for prisons, should any of the "saint's" followers find it "beneficial" to use them as such. An old Italian, who kept a general store, informed us that Joe Smith's widow owned an hotel down in the town, to which place we at once repaired being curious to see such a distinguished individual. Arriving at the place, one of our party enquired if Mrs. Smith could be seen. The aged attendant very curtly replied that "Mrs. Smith was neither very handsome nor very ugly, but that she had a decided objection to being exhibited." Not being satisfied with this rebuke, we determined to stay supper, in the hope that Mrs. Smith might show herself during the evening. In this we were not disappointed, for the lady soon passed through our room, and shortly afterwards condescended to preside at the supper-table. After supper we returned to the river, and directly afterwards the steam-boat was again on its way to St. Louis.

Our wanderings in America have hitherto been confined to the free, or non-slaveholding states of the North; and though slavery, so far as the United States are concerned, is now a thing of the past, and every man in the Union, black or white, is a free man, at the time of which I write this accursed system was one of the leading American institutions, the cause of numerous political struggles, and of much bitterness of feeling, the great curse of a great nation. The momentous events of the late war have now, however, happily established the "stars and stripes" as the flag of a free people, and though this foul blot on their history will never be effaced, the people of the United States, as composing one of the freest nations under the sun, are now destined to play a leading part in the future history of the world.

Proceeding down the Mississippi from Nauvoo, en route to St. Louis, I was soon made aware of changes in the manners and customs of the people: ugly phases of slavery would crop up in almost every nook and cranny. I well remember at a small boat-landing, called Cape-de-Grace, where we stayed for a short time, and which consisted merely of a warehouse and several cottages, twelve negro slaves, all hand-cuffed to a long chain, were put on board, to be conveyed down the river. This chain-gang was in charge of a white man, whose general appearance and proceedings stamped him at once as a professional dealer in human flesh and blood, or, in other words, a slave-trader, and I afterwards learnt that he plied his occupation between the border slave states and the extreme south. This being the first individual of his class whose acquaintance I had had the pleasure of cultivating, my attention was pretty closely bestowed upon him, and I am only sorry that my limited vocabulary of expletives utterly fails to do the gentleman full justice. He might indeed, for aught I know to the contrary, have been the veritable hero so graphically described in the opening chapter of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and who, for convenience sake, was described by Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe as a gentleman. However, the man who stood before me was a whisky-bloated, fendish looking vagabond, and, judging from appearances, would have thought about as little of shooting a man as of shaking him by the hand, and I may say here, once for all, that I never yet set eyes on the slave-dealer whose appearance and general demeanour was not in the highest degree repulsive. When our boat left the landing, the poor ignorant blacks struck up a semi-idiot song, intended, so far as I could gather from the dogrel rhyme, to express their ecstatic bliss at the prospect of "g'wine down souf," as though that place had been the poor slave's Elysium. As our boat, the Jacob Strader, went no further south than St. Louis, on arriving at that place, I determined to spend a little time in watching the slaves and their master. These being the first slaves I had seen, my curiosity was aroused to learn something of the treatment which they received. From the boat, they were driven, still in their chains, through the streets of St. Louis, just like so many cattle, or rather, like a batch of criminals being taken to jail. On arriving at a large enclosure, bounded on all sides by a high wall, the negroes were impounded, their chains taken off, and here they were left for a time to the full enjoyment of their liberty. Within the enclosure were numerous little hovels, more resembling pig-styes than human habitations; these

miserable places were provided for the special purpose of accommodating any slave-trader who wished to make use of them. There was also a slave mart in connection with this place, the scene of many a heart-rending separation of fathers and mothers from their children.

I spent a few days in and around St. Louis. It is a town which exhibits, perhaps as much as any other, the enterprising spirit of the Americans. It is situated on the right bank of the Mississippi, in the State of Missouri, about 170 miles above the mouth of the Ohio, and some 15 miles below the confluence of the Missouri and the Mississippi rivers. It was originally a French settlement, founded about 95 years ago, by a small band of Frenchmen. Twenty or thirty years ago it was described as the "New Orleans of the West." There are now from sixty to seventy principal streets all running parallel with the river. The first four rise one above another in terraces, the remainder being built on a slightly undulating prairie. Most of the buildings are of limestone, in which the district abounds. The country around St. Louis consists of prairies extending for many miles in every direction. Leaving St. Louis, I determined to make a trip up the mighty Missouri, and for this object took passage on board a fine steamboat, called the "Alonso Child." We passed up the Mississippi to the place where it is joined by the Missouri, and thence into the latter river. I shall not now attempt to describe the magnificent appearance of these mighty rivers at their point of contact, as that has been already done by much abler pens than mine, and by persons having more favourable opportunities for making observations than I had. I may, however, state that the difference between the two rivers is very apparent, even to the most casual observer, the waters of the Mississippi being very clear, whilst those of the Missouri are very muddy. The current of the latter river is also much more rapid than that of the former, its ordinary rate being about five miles an hour, consequently it rushes into the clear and placid Mississippi like a mighty conqueror, bearing everything before it. For this and other reasons, it is not so favourable for navigable purposes. Many trees, and long blocks of wood, are brought down by the current. These often become embedded in the river, and if fixed, are called "snags," or "planters;" if capable of an up and down motion, as acted on by the stream, they are called "sawyers;" the boatmen have, however, jocosely dubbed them all "toothpicks." Sand-bars are also very numerous. Add to these evils the fact that the current of the river in many places is constantly changing its course, and you will readily infer that navigating the Missouri is a somewhat dangerous task, and especially is it so during the night time. About twelve o'clock on the third night after leaving St. Louis, the "Alonso Child" came in contact with a snag, which showed its "toothpicking" propensities by tearing off a paddle-box and one side of the cook's pantry, thereby causing great consternation among the passengers. Our boat was held there until the morning, but, fortunately, we did not spring a leak, escaping with the damages already alluded to. The water in the river was very low, and, in consequence, we were continually running on sand-bars, which, of course, delayed us seriously, as the boat in each case had to be spalled off the bar.—In fact, the trip to Kansas City, which was usually made in four days, took us, on this occasion, nine days. At length we reached Kansas City, and as winter was now approaching, I determined to take up my quarters at that place until the following spring. The town contained a population of about 3000 inhabitants. Being the nearest shipping point to New Mexico, I found that supplies were constantly being teamed across the great plains, for about 700 miles, from this place to Santa Fe. From twenty to thirty waggons would leave Kansas City at one time, each waggon carrying about three tons weight of provisions, &c., and being drawn by from ten to twelve oxen. The drivers were Mexicans, or, as the trappers usually called them, "greasers," from their always presenting such a greasy aspect. The waggons, having invariably a white canvas covering, when seen at a long distance, presented an appearance not unlike the sails of a ship; they were, in consequence, locally alluded to as "prairie schooners." During the winter, news was brought to us of the discovery of

gold at a place called Pike's Peak, in Colorado." The excitement which this intelligence created soon rose to fever-heat, and early in the spring, thousands of emigrants, of all nations, passed through Kansas City, in mad haste to reach the desired El Dorado. Nearly all the gold-seekers from the east made this town their rendezvous, it being the most convenient point for starting across the great plains of the western territory. Every house in the town was filled to overflowing by the busy throng, occupied day and night in fitting up teams, and making other hurried, but essential, preparations. To add to the excitement, which was already painfully intense, almost every day brought tidings of how monster nuggets were being constantly picked up, and large fortunes made in a few days. Confusion reigned supreme, and those only who have been witnesses of kindred scenes of excitement can form any idea of its unalleviating reality. In consequence of the enormous demand, horses, mules, and oxen were sold at fabulous prices. All being in readiness, about 25 to 30 teams would move off together, each team having from three to five men, well armed. These precautions were necessary as a protection against the raids of the treacherous Indians, who often proved troublesome, especially to small numbers of indifferently armed men.

I was, of course, seized with the gold-fever, and, in lieu of having nothing else to do, thought I might as well just go out to Pike's Peak and make my fortune. I, therefore, purchased a yoke of oxen, a covered wagon, a rifle, and blankets; laid in a good supply of provisions, with the necessary cooking utensils,—these latter consisted chiefly of a water-bottle, skillet or frying-pan, coffee pot, tin cups, tin plates, and knives and forks. Thus equipped, and with a heart full of hope, I bid adieu to Kansas City, and started across the plains, having for a companion a trustworthy fellow, who was by profession a surveyor, and who carried with him a complete set of instruments.

Leaving Kansas City rather late in the afternoon, we proceeded on our journey for about three miles, when we arrived at a Shawnee village, built on the edge of the prairie, on a tract of land reserved by the United States Government for the occupation of the Shawnee Indians. The Shawnees have, to some extent, settled down to agricultural pursuits. A few of them are comparatively wealthy—their property consisting chiefly of innumerable little ponies. Though these Indians are in many respects leading a life of civilisation, yet in some the love of the chase, with its wild excitement, is so strong, that, should a deer or other wild animal accidentally cross their path, they will bound away from any occupation upon which they may be engaged, and will often not be seen again for days; they have actually been known to leave their oxen attached to the plough for the space of 48 hours, until they returned from one of these hunting excursions.

It was decided that we should encamp for the first night at this Shawnee village, and, as is customary, we drew up our waggon so as to form a circle, with an open space in the centre. After supper, a council was held in this open space, when plans for our future proceedings were proposed and discussed. The leading topic had regard to mutual protection in cases of danger, which might from many causes arise, and—not to be too positive—the manner in which we repelled our copper coloured brethren, and despatched wild animals would have done us great credit—*on canvas*. At this meeting I had a good opportunity for taking stock of our companions. They were indeed a motley group, the bulk of them being powerful hardy fellows, whose weather-beaten faces proved that in the race for gold they were prepared to "rough it," as they had already done before. Having agreed upon our plans of attack and defence, each man betook himself to his respective wagon for the night, there to arrange matters of a more domestic nature with his immediate companions. I was under the necessity of taking choice of two occupations, viz., either to turn bullock-driver or cook, and as my previous education in both these directions had been shockingly neglected, I felt myself in a quandary. My first impulse was decidedly in favour of taking the command of my "noble steeds," for how simple a task it seemed to be, to sit behind a couple of oxen, and with the reins in one hand and a substantial whip in the other, bellow forth the word of command. On the other hand, how intricate and mysterious is the art of cookery, including, besides the mere preparation of

meals, such a multiplicity of "little nothings," that, as the women say, "one never knows when one's work is done;" but I ultimately decided in favour of the culinary department, being encouraged in my choice by a consideration of the limited nature of our stands; besides we might ultimately be reduced to the strait of having "nothing to cook," in which case I (the cook) would have a decided advantage over my companion.

Early next morning, we started across the prairie, on the Santa Fe route, and by night fall had made about 30 miles, when we again encamped for the night. Half-past three in the morning found us all astir again, and by four o'clock we made another start, traveling until about ten o'clock; we then halted for four hours, in order to give the animals a feed and a little rest, at the same time treating ourselves in a like respectful manner. Our journey was then continued until six in the evening, when we again took up quarters for the night. On going to rest, a guard of three men was appointed to look after the oxen, and give an alarm in case of danger. In this way we passed day after day, without meeting with anything to vary the monotony of the journey, until the fancied charm of a prairie life was gradually growing "small by degrees and beautifully less." The country in every direction was flat and uninteresting; objects could be seen in the morning which it took us a good day's journey to reach. Occasionally we would come across a gully with a stream of fresh water, which was indeed acceptable to both man and beast. I think it was on the third night after leaving the Shawnee village, we came to a ranch, situated on the banks of the Kaw River, which river we had to cross. The ranch consisted merely of a two-story log house, where you could, according to local phraseology, obtain abundance of whiskey "warranted to kill at a hundred yards." I need scarcely add that this place was one of very powerful attraction to the surrounding neighbourhood, not only on account of its whisky, but for the plentiful supply of fresh water which could at any time be obtained. At the time of our arrival, we found a company of "greasers" in full carousal, whose appearance and general demeanour caused us to adopt the policy which is expressed in sea-faring language as giving them a wide berth, and it was well that we did so, for the demon-like noises which reached us at intervals throughout the night showed that brawling and fighting were to them as mere amusements. Next morning, however, their differences appeared to have vanished, and all were fairly "ship-shape," with the exception of one poor fellow whom we found lying on the ground scarcely able to move, and who begged as though for life that some of us would give him a little buffalo steak. Anxious to get away from this at present uninviting spot we broke camp and departed. We subsequently encountered several companies of "greasers," and to see them on the march is a sight not easily erased from the memory. If the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals should at any time be on the look out for a new field of labour, let its attention be directed to these Mexican carriers, and I will guarantee that it will find ample scope for its humane occupation. I have before stated that their waggon, or "Prairie schooners" are covered with white canvas; around these covers are stretched thick ropes, upon which are hung long stripes of buffalo meat, which, from long exposure to the sun, becomes very dry and hard, and looks like anything but a tempting morsel for a dainty stomach, though it is much relished by the "greasers." The waggon are usually heavily laden, so that traveling at even a moderate pace, except where the road is very good, is out of the question. It is pitiful to see the poor oxen towards the close of a day's journey (performed under the burning sun, and perhaps wholly without water), with blood-shot eyes, and tongues hanging far out of their mouths, tugging away at the lumbering load behind them, whilst their inhuman drivers, with whip-stocks, like clothes props, and thick buffalo lashes attached, are urging them on at their utmost speed. The "thud" of the heavy lash as at almost every moment it falls upon the perspiration-soddened hides of some of the poor brutes, would evoke pity from the heart of any but a "Mexican greaser."

In consequence of the marshy ground in the vicinity of some of the gulleys, or brooks, crossing was sometimes a matter of difficulty. I remember one morning coming to one of these gulleys, where we found a whole train of "greasers" at a dead lock, in consequence of the first wagon having broken its axle on ascending the slight

inches. We were obliged to wait until they extricated themselves from their difficulty, which they were not long in doing, being evidently accustomed to, and well-prepared for, accidents of this nature. As each driver plodded by, after being liberated, he would salute us, in his mongrel French, with "*Bon jour* ; *bon jour, monsieur* ;" and we "*bon jourred*" at each other until nearly the whole train had passed, when up came a tall, powerful, black-haired fellow, of the true "greaser" type, and in the richest of brogues proclaimed his nationality the moment he opened his mouth to bid me "good mornin', yer honour." Who would have thought to find a son of the Emerald Isle doing the "Mexican greaser" business! This incident tended to confirm me in the impression that if you want a man to adapt himself to any circumstances or occupation, you must take an Irishman.

We are now fairly on the plain, or, as it has been called "The American Desert"—not a single habitation to be seen—about and around is one vast wilderness, the home and grazing ground of the wild buffalo—lying above a thousand miles from the sea, the air is very dry, whilst a scorching sun is shining overhead. Occasionally small bands of Indians will make their unwelcome appearance, ostensibly for the purpose of bartering the skins of

the buffalo and other wild animals for whisky or trinkets—nay, they would even sometimes offer their rifles in exchange for a small quantity of the much-loved "fire-water." But barter was only a secondary object, their real purpose being, doubtless, to measure the strength of our company, to ascertain what precautions we may have taken to guard against a surprise, and what would be their chances of effecting a successful stampede of our cattle. However, these little incidents served in some degree to relieve the dull routine of a day's journey. On we plodded, cheering each other as we best could, by relating stories of past times making ourselves familiar with each other's history, and holding out hopes of the bright prospects before us. Our gipsy style of life, too, was not without a certain rough charm. Many a pleasant hour did we pass, when, at the close of a day's journey, we seated ourselves around our camp fires, and, lighting our short, black pipes, occupied the time in "spinning yarns."

When we had been on the plains about three weeks we met a small band of gold-diggers returning from the mines, and "a change came o'er the spirit of our dreams." I shall not soon forget the looks of black dismay which passed from one countenance to another of our party, as we received the first woeful intelligence that the gold-mines were a failure. Unwilling, however, to believe these unfavourable reports we still pressed on, anxious to lose no time in gaining the scene of operations. Next day we met more waggons returning and had the mortification to hear the previous bad news confirmed—still on we went. Each succeeding day now brought several trains of returning emigrants, weather-beaten and discouraged, their careworn and haggard faces told plainly enough, how hard had been the struggle to keep body and soul together. Some of them told us that flour, which had to be teamed from Salt Lake city, was 12 dollars per 100 lbs., and that other necessities were proportionately high in price. What should we do? It was bad enough to have come so far and spent so much time on a sleeveless errand, but should we mend matters by going forward, "That was the question." A short council was held, at which the prevailing sentiment was that "discretion was the better part of valour." Our return was ultimately agreed upon, and with great reluctance, and many a long, long look towards the "promised land," we began slowly and sadly to retrace our steps.

(To be continued.)

When it was finally determined to abandon our fruitless gold-seeking expedition, we had travelled the plains as far as a range of mountains, called the "Buffalo Range," in consequence, I suppose, of the immense herds of buffaloes. Timorous to frequent that locality. Gloomily enough passed the first day or two of our return march, weary and dispirited, we were in no mood to court excitement, enjoyment might have been a thing totally unknown to us, our conversation consisted of monosyllabic answers to the briefest of questions, in proportion as we had been elated with hope, we were now depressed with disappointment, all the social qualities which make life agreeable seemed banished from our midst.

We were out of words, out of numbers, & nearly out of Cash, this mischance combined is of "outs," when almost out of humanity's reach had, as might be expected, the effect of putting everything out of joint. We were about as lively & game some as you might expect a number of men to be who had not partaken of food for 24 hours & did not expect to have a meal for 24 hours more. Had the renowned Mr. Tappan been one of our number he would, I think have found some difficulty in being "jolly" under the circumstances & have taken credit to himself accordingly. Our progress was but slow, no one appearing particularly anxious to push forward. On several occasions we came upon large numbers of buffaloes quietly grazing like so many cattle.

(3)

on the plains. Although they covered a very large area, yet they gave us little opportunity to cultivate a closer acquaintance, in fact, almost before we were aware of their presence, the whole herd would be on the move, made aware of our approach by some secret telegraphic communication unknown to us. A general restlessness was first observed, then a decided commotion, & finally the whole herd would bound away, giving utterance to low bellowings which sounded very much like distant thunder. Here & there fierce combats would take place between two rival buffaloes, they would were but of short duration, the mode of operation being two severe to last for any length of time. It was a sight to see them goring each other with their short

(4)

horns, butting their heads together & tearing up the earth with their feet, & and our brain boasted any heres we might have been tempted to get up a buffalo hunt, with a view to its excitement restoring the life & harmony of the camp. But the gloom which oppressed us could not last for ever, it very untimely decided to make it of short duration for what after all is the good of repining; true, we had suffered grievous disappointment, & had risked almost everything, even our lives, for the chance of making our fortunes, & when as we thought our joys were about to culminate in the possession of riches, all our hopes were suddenly blasted & we saw ourselves in every sense in a worse position. Then when

(5)

we first started out. Still the world was before us, we were all young men & if the journey had served us other well, it had at all events added something to our already clearly bought experience. By & by we condescended to become a little more agreeable, trying to amuse each other & pass away the time, by sending small devices, until in a few days our camp got divided, in consequence of the wishes of some to push forward, while others, having no definite object in view, were not so disposed. At last my left one in companion proposed that we should leave the camp & set up business on our own account. To this I assented, we had by this time got as far on our return journey as the river Arkansas, consequently we agreed to follow the course of the

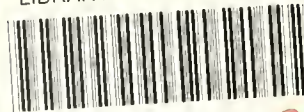
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river for some time, then to hunt our way through Southern Kansas. Bidding adieu to our companions we started on our lonely & somewhat dangerous journey. We soon struck a fine belt of timber & to our intense joy found it to contain abundance of game, especially of deer. My mate, who was a crack shot, soon brought one of these to grief & after we had lived for several weeks upon salt pork, you will scarcely need my assurance that a haunch of venison was a very agreeable change in our diet. Forward we plodded, keeping steadily close to the outskirts of the wood, & at night drawing up our camp in the safest places to be found. After we had

the wolves howling, through the
night, just like so many terrier
dogs. After journeying in this
way for a few days we fell
in with a small party of
trappers, all well mounted on
spirited horses. These trappers
were a mongrel race of men
part Indian part Spanish and
white men seen like students
of wandering hunters' happenings
adventures and desperadoes of every
clash and country greatly excited
from social ~~and country~~ ^{camp} into the
wilderness having the right
with us and going to live with
American with them they began
the spirit men simple game but
very hard to get even sometimes
in front of us from the side of
the journey & never to be seen &

camp fire on the edge of the prairie and where Indians might be lurking round the same time. However we parted with our new friends bid good by and started on our tortoise journey through the charoche Nation to Cheesha through Otawa they cut up by ravens and brooks and entangled thickets we encamped upon a grand prairie called Long Skin Prairie. we commence at first of roading country its gradual ascent brings us to Springfield On the Osage Mountains this is our settlement. These new people in an isolated part of the country within a few hundred miles of river or trail road and seem to live in their isolation. The town is an isolated

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